# warning signs of ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Memory loss that disrupts daily life

Challenges in planning or solving problems

Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure

Confusion to time and place

Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships

New problems with words in speaking or writing

Misplacing things or losing the ability to retrace steps

Decreased or poor judgment

Withdrawal from work or social activities

Changes in mood and personality

Information adapted from the Alzheimer's Association Know the 10 Signs checklist. http://www.alz.org/national/documents/checklist\_10signs.pdf

## **How to Contact Us**

The Division of Alzheimer's Disease & Other Dementia is located in the Department of Mental Health's Central Office in Jackson with satellite offices in Tupelo, Magee, and Long Beach. For more information please contact:

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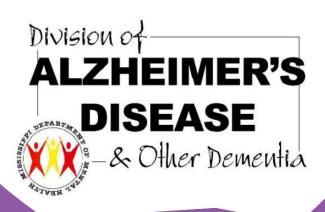
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Supporting a Better Tomorrow...Today





what You should KNXVV about Alzheimer's clisease



Mississippi Department of Mental Health www.dmh.ms.gov

## Communication **Techniques**

- Identify yourself and address the person by name, establish and maintain eye contact, smile, and be friendly in your approach.
- Ask one question, or make one statement at a time, speaking slowly and directly.
- Allow enough time for the person to respond.
- Use nonverbal communication such as pointing or nodding, providing assistance when needed.
- Be patient, flexible and reassuring rather than criticizing, arguing or correcting the person.
- Focus on feelings, not facts, by responding to and validating the person's feelings.
- Use familiar words and cues, and be consistent, repeating information or questions as needed.

# **Tips for Reducing Risk**

As we learn more about the role they may play in Alzheimer's disease risk, health experts encourage all adults to:

- exercise regularly
- eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables
- engage in social and intellectually stimulating activities
- control type 2 diabetes
- lower high blood pressure levels
- lower high blood cholesterol levels
- maintain a healthy weight
- stop smoking
- get treatment for depression

National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

# **Caregiver Tips**

- Recognize added stress in your life and take care of your own health care needs.
- Realize it is OKAY to ask for help from a friend, so accept help when offered.
- Take a day off when you can and do something fun for yourself.
- Share and express your feelings with someone.
- Remove yourself from the situation when possible.
- Join a caregiver support group.
- Remember, you are not in this alone.

Caregiving is a difficult job in the best of circumstances. Taking care of vourself is essential for your own health and the care of your loved one.

# **Getting Help**

#### Where to Go for an Evaluation:

Family physician, local hospital, teaching hospitals or medical schools, Geriatricians or Neurologists

There is no single diagnostic test for Alzheimer's disease. A diagnosis is made by ruling out other possible causes of Alzheimer-like symptoms. Once all tests are completed, a diagnosis of "probable" Alzheimer's disease may be made.

\*Please note: Changes in diagnostic language utilized in the DSM-V refer to dementia as major and minor neurocognitive disorders. Healthcare professionals may use this terminology.

## What to Expect During an Evaluation

The entire evaluation process generally takes more than one day. Typically, a thorough evaluation may include:

- Detailed medical & social history
- Physical examination
- Neurological examination
- Mental status examination
- Psychiatric evaluation
- Laboratory tests scans



